

Personal privacy information

I023902
-001

Fw: Bee Kill at [REDACTED] 4/19/2012
Thomas Steeger to: Norman Spurling

04/20/2012 05:58 AM

Beekill incident report; more information may be coming once the state has completed its analysis.

----- Forwarded by Thomas Steeger/DC/USEPA/US on 04/20/2012 05:57 AM -----

From: Thomas Steeger/DC/USEPA/US
To: [REDACTED]
Date: 04/20/2012 05:57 AM
Subject: Re: Bee Kill at [REDACTED] 4/19/2012

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your recent email and for [REDACTED] willingness to talk with me by phone yesterday regarding the loss of bees you observed on Thursday, April 19, in honeybee cell builder colonies. Based on our phone conversation, you indicated that a total of 33 nucleus [cell builder] colonies were exhibiting dead/dying bees at the entrances of the colonies. These colonies are associated with your honeybee queen breeding operation and at this time, 100 queen cells had also been lost. You associated the losses with the seeding of corn on land adjacent (400 yds) to your property; the grower was seeding treated corn under dry windy conditions on April 18 and your beeyard is downwind from the corn field. You noted that the grower had also seeded corn in close proximity (300 yds) of your queen breeding operation on April 17 and again you were downwind from the fields.

According to your father, who maintains the queen breeding colonies, the bees are provided supplemental feed (pollen/protein diet); however, they do not avail themselves to this diet when alternative [fresh] pollen/nectar is available. At this time, bees in your operation would likely be feeding on dandelions and common winter cress (yellow rocket). Your father noted that dust from the corn seeding activity was moving across your property because of the dry conditions and southerly wind direction.

You indicated that you also have 2,300 colonies scattered throughout Indiana and that these bees are used in both pollination services and honey production. At this time, the main effect that you have observed is to your cell builder colonies (adult forage bee mortality) and to queen cell production frames (nurse bees chew down the developing queen cells.) Excluding your queen breeding operation, you noted that some of the other bee colonies you maintain had recently returned from providing pollination services in California almonds. You also noted that there are apiary locations in Indiana where some of your bees have had a poor history of productivity and that you may be able to provide information on what crops are grown in the vicinity of these less productive colonies.

You indicated that you had attempted to register your bees through Drift Watch; however, you have had difficulty enrolling on-line. Also, you have notified state representatives who will be coming to take samples of your bees this week and you have provided frozen dead bee samples to Purdue University (Greg Hunt). You also indicated that a representative of the technical [pesticide] registrant Bayer CropScience will be meeting with you.

As I indicated on the phone, the information you provided will be entered into the EPA Office of Pesticide Programs' Incident Data System (IDS) and in the Ecological Incident Information System (EIS). If you see any factual errors in the information that I have summarized in this email, please let me know. It will be very helpful if you can also provide the results of the state's investigation particularly if any pesticide residues are detected in the bee/samples collected by the state. Also, any information that Purdue University provides to you regarding your losses would also be of interest to EPA.

Once again, thank you for your willingness to share this information with EPA.

Personal privacy information

Sincerely,

Tom Steeger

Thomas Steeger, Ph.D.
Senior Science Advisor
Environmental Fate and Effects Division
U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (MC 7507P)
Ariel Rios Building
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington DC 20460
(703) 305-5444 (Office)
(703) 305-6019 (FAX)

[REDACTED] To whom it may concern, I am attaching 2 photo...

04/19/2012 02:01:14 PM

From: [REDACTED]
To: Beekill@EPA, Thomas Steeger/DC/USEPA/US@EPA
Date: 04/19/2012 02:01 PM
Subject: Bee Kill at [REDACTED] 4/19/2012

To whom it may concern,

I am attaching 2 photos; I also have video of erratic bee behavior we believe these are attributed to the fact a local farmer planted corn near our hive locations yesterday and day before. Information has been sent to Purdue and the State Chemist. I have received a phone call from an investigator that she will be here tomorrow to collect samples and see what is going on. I was also told by my brother [REDACTED] that a representative from Bayer Corporation will be here next week.

The first photo is of dead bees at hive entrance, the second photo is newly raised queens in our nucs that were found lying dead outside of nuc in same location as other hives. We have also lost the production of about 100 queen cells at this location.

I will continue to document any information I can. This die off was found this morning and there are still bees dying as I type this at 1:48 pm. These bees have been sitting here at this location for a few weeks with no issues. It is a yard we use as queen cell builders and breeders.

Thank You

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
765-981-4443[attachment "deadbeesdayafter.JPG" deleted by Thomas Steeger/DC/USEPA/US]
[attachment "queensfound dead.JPG" deleted by Thomas Steeger/DC/USEPA/US]

